US State Department Report on Human Right Practices

2943. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the United States Department report on Human Right practices which has referred to religions freedom in Indian at "State and local levels only partially" and also criticised "social violence" in the country, as reported in the Hindustan Times dated the 29th February, 2000;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) what is the Government's reaction thereto ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The US State Department's Human Right Report is an intenral report of the United States, mandated by the US Congress. It discusses the state of human rights in 190 countries.

(c) It is a report of US Administration to the US Congress. Government of India has not been consulted in any manner. We regard it as an internal exercise of the US. We do not respond to it. We take no cognisance of it.

Pak Mercenaries Along LOC

2944. CHAUDHARY CHUNI LAL : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to a news item captioned "Pak amassing mercenaries along LOC" appeared in the Hindustan Times dated March 20, 2000;

(b) if so, the reaction thereto;

(c) whether Government have taken up the issue of ISI activities with Nepalese Government; and

(d) if so, the results achieved ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir, Government have seen the report appearing in the Hindustan Times of 20th March, 2000. Government remain firm in their resolve to ensure the sanctity of the Line of Control and to this end defeat all Pakistani attempts to violate the LOC, including through its sponsorship of cross-border terrorism.